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have it in



The Secret Diary of Lady Macbeth
After receiving a letter from Macbeth
Earlier today, I received a most urgent letter from Macbeth. He told me that he was accosted by three witches on the night of the battle between Scotland and Norway. They greeted him “ All hail Macbeth, hail to thee, Thane of Glamis! All hail Macbeth, hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor! All hail Macbeth, that shalt be King hereafter!” Macbeth was “ rapt” with what the witches had said and tried to question them further but they vanished into a haze of fog. I could see his enthusiasm from his vocabulary and could tell that he believed the witches, even though they are feared and many hundreds have been burned. He said he “ burned in desire” to question them further, indicating that he was almost on fire with this knowledge that came from the “ perfect’st report”.

Witches have metaphysical powers and “ more in them than mortal knowledge”. Later that day Macbeth received a message from the King saying he was to become Thane of Cawdor. He called me his “ dearest partner of greatness” and plans to share the glory of the golden round with me. He sent the letter by messenger despite the danger of the contents being read by others, when it could have waited until he arrived here.

Having seen Macbeth’s enthusiasm, I will take my cue from him. His letters have “ transported me beyond this ignorant present”. I nearly told a messenger who brought news of the King coming to stay, of my thoughts and for one moment, I reacted as though Macbeth were already King, and I Queen, I must be more careful in the future. I have made the decision that Macbeth will be King, the only problem being that he is “ too full of the milk

of human kindness” and does not have it in him to do the unthinkable deed, at heart Macbeth is a giver and not a destroyer.

I see my role as Macbeth’s strengthener. I wish that I could persuade him to “ catch the nearest way”. To this end, I asked the evil spirits to take my womanly qualities away. I asked them to take my milk and replace it with gall. I am asking to become a poisoner instead of a nourisher. I asked for unnatural darkness so that heaven will not see and cry: “ Hold, hold!” No one must see the murder, as killing the King is an unthinkable act; it is just like killing God. I will have to teach Macbeth the lessons of deceit and hypocrisy.

I told him “ bear welcome in your eye, your hand, your tongue; look like th’ innocent flower, but be the serpent under’t.” I meant the serpent in the Garden of Eden, who is really the Devil. After that I felt so confident, I was able to pun. I chose my words carefully. When I advised Macbeth he put the “ night’s great business into my despatch”, he knew that underneath the domestic arrangements I was implying murder. Macbeth was less confident than I was and I reassured him by saying “ leave the rest to me”. I was taking all the responsibility from him and placing it on myself.

After the murderIt was the worst night of my life. I thought that after the deed was done everything would be well. I thought everything would run smoothly.

It did not. Before the banquet was finished, while everyone was sitting down for the meal, Macbeth left and went to the courtyard. I went to see him and he said, “ We will proceed no further in this business”.

It was a disaster and I was shocked. I had to try my hardest to get him to change his mind. I even suggested that Macbeth was a coward; he kills people every day, yet he cannot do this one thing. I told him that he was green and said that he was “ like the poor cat i’ th’ adage”, who would not get his paws wet to get the fish that he wanted. I was drawing a parallel between the cat and Macbeth.

He took offence and was astonished at what I had suggested